AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following Listing of Claims replaces all previous listings of claims in this application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A process for producing a catalyst for catalytic gas-phase oxidations of aromatic hydrocarbons to carboxylic acids and/or carboxylic anhydrides, which comprises

weighing a particulate inert support having a total mass of $M_{support}$ into a fluidized-bed apparatus,

providing an aqueous suspension of a catalytically active material or sources thereof and a binder having a binder content of B_{susp},

fluidizing the inert support by introduction of a gas stream heated to a temperature of T_{gas} at a flow rate of Q_{gas}, and

spraying the suspension at a rate of Q_{susp} onto the fluidized inert support,

wherein:

Q_{gas} is from 3,000 m^3/h to 9,000 m^3/h,
Q_{susp} is from 1,000 g/min to 3,500 g/min,
B_{susp} is from 2% by weight to 18% by weight of the total suspension,
$M_{support}$ is from 60 kg to 240 kg, and
T_{gas} is from 75° C to 120° C

so that a paramenter K defined as

$$K = 0.020\ Q_{gas} - 0.055\ Q_{susp} + 7.500\ B_{susp} - 0.667\ M_{support} + 2.069\ T_{gas} - 7$$

satisfies the relationship $127.5 \leq K \leq 202$.

2. (Previously presented) The process according to claim 1, wherein the parameter K is in a range $136.0 \leq K \leq 193.5$ and

Q_{gas} is from 4,500 m^3/h to 7,500 m^3/h,
Q_{susp} is from 1,500 g/min to 3,000 g/min,
B_{susp} is from 5% by weight to 15% by weight of the total suspension,
$M_{support}$ is from 100 kg to 200 kg, and
T_{gas} is from 80° C to 115° C.

3. (Previously presented) The process according to claim 2, wherein the parameter K is in a range $143 \leq K \leq 184.5$ and

Q_{gas} is from 5,500 m^3/h to 6,500 m^3/h,
Q_{susp} is from 2,000 g/min to 2,500 g/min,
B_{susp} is from 6% by weight to 11% by weight of the total suspension,
$M_{support}$ is from 120 kg to 180 kg, and
T_{gas} is from 90° C to 115° C.

4. (Previously presented) The process according to claim 1, wherein the gas which is introduced is air.

5. (Previously presented) The process according to claim 1, wherein a second aqueous suspension of catalytically active material and binder is provided and is sprayed onto the fluidized support which has been coated with the first suspension.

6. (Original) The process according to claim 5, wherein the support which has been coated with the first suspension is dried before the second suspension is sprayed onto it.

7. (Previously presented) The process according to claim 1, wherein the particulate inert support is provided in the form of spheres, cylinders, rings or columns.

8. (Previously presented) The process according to claim 1, wherein the fluidized-bed apparatus is a container for accommodating the particulate support in whose lower region a dish-like depression is provided and which comprises a central tube for introducing the gas which extends essentially axially downward in the container and opens into the depression, an essentially annular deflection shield which is fixed to the central tube in the upper region of the container and a guide ring which is located in the lower region of the container and surrounds the central tube essentially concentrically over part of its length and means for spraying-in the first and, if applicable, second suspension.

9. (Original) The process according to claim 8, wherein the first or second suspension comprises TiO_2 and V_2O_5 particles, where at least 90% by volume of the V_2O_5 particles have a diameter of 20 μm or less and at least 95% by volume of the V_2O_5 particles have a diameter of 30 μm or less.

10. (Previously presented) The process according to claim 1, wherein V_2O_5 particles or dissolved vanadium is used for the first or second suspension.

11. (Withdrawn) A method of preparing phthalic anhydride from o-xylene, naphthalane, or mixtures thereof, comprising catalyzing a gas-phase oxidation utilizing a catalyst prepared according to claim 1.

12. (Previously presented) The process according to claim 2, wherein the gas which is introduced is air.

13. (Previously presented) The process according to claim 3, wherein the gas which is introduced is air.

14. (Previously presented) The process according to claim 2, wherein a second aqueous suspension of catalytically active material and binder is provided and is sprayed onto the fluidized support which has been coated with the first suspension.

15. (Previously presented) The process according to claim 3, wherein a second aqueous suspension of catalytically active material and binder is provided and is sprayed onto the fluidized support which has been coated with the first suspension.

16. (Previously presented) The process according to claim 4, wherein a second aqueous suspension of catalytically active material and binder is provided and is sprayed onto the fluidized support which has been coated with the first suspension.

17. (Previously presented) The process according to claim 1, wherein the particulate inert support is provided in the form of spheres, cylinders, rings or columns, with dimensions of from 5 to 15 mm.

18. (Previously presented) The process according to claim 2, wherein the particulate inert support is provided in the form of spheres, cylinders, rings or columns.

19. (Previously presented) The process according to claim 2, wherein the particulate inert support is provided in the form of spheres, cylinders, rings or columns, with dimensions of from 5 to 15 mm.

20. (Previously presented) The process according to claim 3, wherein the particulate inert support is provided in the form of spheres, cylinders, rings or columns.